

A CRY OF OPPRESSION

FROM ORWEL,

By the OPPOSERS of, and PROTESTERS

AGAINST THE

SETTLEMENT OF

Mr. THOMAS PORTEOUS there.

1507/1298

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*With force and with cruelty have ye ruled them,  
Ezek. xxxiv. 4.*

*Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the  
law dishonourest thou God, for the name of God is blasphem-  
ed among the Gentiles thro' you, Rom. iii. 23, 24.*

*Surely your turning of things upside down shall be  
as the Potters clay, Isa. xxix. 16.*

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P E R T H

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# P R E F A C E.

**I**T will no doubt be thought strange, that we should come to the public at this time, especially when writings of this kind are so frequent; yet, as the wise man says, oppression makes a wise man mad. We have long cried out of oppression and violence, at judicatories, and have not been heard, and we reckon it is in some respect for the glory of God, and also for the exoneration of our own consciences; like the Damsel that cried, Deut. xxii. 27. *For he found her in the field, and the betrothed Damsel cried, and there was none to save her.*

When Saul said to Samuel, I have performed the commandment of the Lord, Samuel replied, What meaneth this bleating of the sheep, and lowing of the oxen which I hear? so may it be said to the Burgher associate judicatories, if they have performed the commandment of the Lord, in lifting up a testimony against violent intrusions, and for the relief of the oppressed heritage of God. What meaneth this bleating of the sheep at Stirling, and Orwel? &c.

*Quæ Culpæ solis ca tu ne fueris ipse,*

*Tur pe est doctori cum culpæ darquit ipsum. CATO.*

Do not these things, which thou thyself

In others use to blame;

When fault returns upon himself,

To ~~feather~~ his great shame.

*Teacher*

We and our brethren in Stirling, have no doubt, highly provoked a holy God, by not improving our singular privileges, being among the first in the session, so that he may justly set us up as a beacon to others; saying as in Jer vii. 12. *But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it, for the wickedness of my people Israel; yet that will*

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*never*

never justify the sinful hands of men, the Lord permits in inflicting his judgments.

Intrusions in the established church, and in the session, are equally to be testified against, tho' in the one by civil, and in the other by ecclesiastic patrons who when the call does not please them by a vote dismiss it, as not being for edification, and when it pleases them again, they sustain it; as being for edification. And thus they make their mere *ipsi dixerunt* in the session, as essential as the patrons presentation in the established church.

They do indeed pretend, they have a majority in the congregation, and so is it many times in the established church, that a majority falls in with the patrons presentic for this very reason, they cannot get another; and so it is in the session; the calls brought out by the congregation are cast, and cast, and cast, whereby the people are wearied out of it, and they see they will never get one until they fix on the candidate the judicatory intends to settle.

Now as there are several Papers that were given into the Judicatories not inserted here, in regard they would have swelled this short narrative, beyond the intendment thereof; yet, a few are inserted, whereby the reader may have these as a specimen to judge by; and it is hoped the candid reader, will excuse the unaccuracy of the stile, in regard we had none graduate among us, to assist therein.



*for session read session*





A CRY of OPPRESSION from  
ORWEL, By the OPPOSERS  
of, and PROTESTERS against  
the Settlement of Mr. THOMAS  
PORIEOUS there.

**I**T pleased the Lord in his adorable providence, to lay  
aside our late worthy pastor, from the exercise of his  
ministerial work among us, by bodily indisposition.

And we, being in a destitute case as to any appear-  
ance of relief from our pastor, essayed to join with the  
Antiburghers, and attempts that way, proving abortive.

The congregation agreed to make application to the  
Burghers, to sympathise so far with us, as supply Mr.  
Mair, in his present distress, and the congregation in their  
present situation; and accordingly some were commisi-  
oned to attend their first meeting of presbytery, and to  
lay our case before them, as above express:

Accordingly the presbytery having met at Kirkcaldie,  
commissioners attended the same, and laid matters before  
them as appointed. After being fully heard by the pres-  
bytery, and some reasoning upon the affair, they came to  
agree, to grant supply of sermon. Immediately after a  
demur was in the congregation, on what footing it was  
given; till the object that did supply gave it under his  
hand to the commissioners. He came on the forsaide  
ground, namely to supply in the mean time, and that we  
should be allowed afterward, to bring in our scriptures in  
order to be satisfied thereanent, for a full conscience  
with them.

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Accordingly

Accordingly, supply being given for some time, some of our congregation gave in a paper, the tenor whereof follows:

*Unto the very Reverend Moderator, and Reverend Members of the Associate Presbytery, to meet at Perth, the 29th of December, 1767.*

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

**T**HAT as we in this community have been, in a very singular situation for some time past, particularly since our worthy pastor was laid aside by distress; although this congregation, have been applying to this presbytery for supply of sermon, and have got it; which we are not in the least opposing, and shall be glad that they continue seeking; and also that the reverend presbytery should give them necessary supplies, for assisting our worthy pastor in his present distress. But in regard that several members of this community, are still labouring under several difficulties; that we would be glad that this reverend presbytery would give us some satisfaction in the following particulars:

In the first place, It is known that our worthy pastor has been in this singular situation for some time, on the account of difference of doctrine with his brethren, which doctrine, as taught by our pastor, we desire to adhere unto, particularly that the ordinate, ordained or appointed sufficiency of the death of Christ; for all is a very great, and special encouraging ground and warrant for all to whom the gospel comes, to believe in the blood of Christ, for the only foundation of our justification before God, and for inviting all, as a door is opened for so doing, to believe in this blood with particular application.

Secondly, We believe and maintain, that every revelation of the person, offices, death, satisfaction and righteousness of Christ, every offer and call of the gospel, every letter



letter of Christ's name: this is a good ground and an encouragement for us. We maintain that all have a just claim of right unto the promises, and to his righteousness exhibited in them. That every man to whom the gospel comes, is warranted by the Lord in his word, to appropriate by faith, the blood of Christ, as the payment of his debt. That he is not to seek a warrant for his appropriating that, in any secret purpose of God concerning his election; or any purpose of God, with reference in the intended efficacy: which doctrine we desire to be found adhering unto, as it is agreeable to the word of God, and our received standards, and the doctrine of grace emitted by the associate presbytery, and sworn to in our covenants; and as the Lord in his divine providence, was pleased to stir up the associate presbytery to lift up a judicial act and testimony, in favours of our covenanted principles, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, as the same was sworn to in these lands; and against many steps of defections that had taken place in these lands, both in former and present times; and at the mean time, they do acknowledge their duty with thankfulness, to commemorate the divine power and goodness, manifested in this wonderful work; whereby all these three nations were rescued from popery and slavery, which they were in for the space of twenty eight years before the revolution. So they add, it might have been justly expected, upon the back of such a remarkable and great favour of God, that former iniquities and backsliding should have been particularly acknowledged, and the house of God purged; and that reformation work should have been advanced, and carried on after the examples and practices of former reforming periods: but instead of this, our transgressions are multiplied, our sins and backslidings are added to our former backslidings and defections.



And the presbytery add,

And that many iniquities and blasphemous statutes were made in the two persecuting reigns, for dethroning the glorious Redeemer, and pulling the crown which he should wear from his royal head. Yet the assembly 1690, did not assert the divine right of presbytery, and intrinsic power of the church, which are two essential branches of his glorious headship in and over the same. And after the presbytery take a short view of the settlement of religion, both by church and state at the revolution (they say) when these things are duly considered, and former reforming periods and this compared, what a vast difference is there between the house of God in Scotland, in its former lustre and glory, and the fabric and building it is now reared up? By church and state at the revolution, the above practice of both church and state is contrary to scripture pattern and example, and the practice of reforming times recorded there, 2 Chron. 34, 29 to the close. Ezra 9 and 10 chap. chap. 19 10. Ps. 78. Ps. 106. throughout. Moreover, the presbytery asserteth, that the whole of the reformation attained to, betwixt the year 1638, and 1649, lie buried; under several acts of parliament unto this day, particularly that infamous act recessory, which stand unrepealed unto this day; which testimony, as above, we adhere unto, and we are not able to reconcile the present manner of establishing religion at the revolution with the Solemn League and Covenant, which the three lands are solemnly engaged in, and the most of us have adhered to in the bond; but although this reverend judicatory hath alledged that there are several mistakes in the testimony, with respect to the settlements of religion at the revolution; yet these are things that we are not reconciled about the truth of them, for as the difference that hath taken place about the testimony, is about the religious clause of some Bur-



ges oaths in this realm ; which oath we are not able to reconcile with the covenant of the three lands. We must acknowledge that when the Lord led the presbytery forward to a lifting up of their hands in a covenant of duty, the Lord did then remarkably appear, in carrying on the work at that time ; to which we have clearance to adhere unto. And as we have publickly acknowledged this as a part of our reformation principles, which have been earnestly contended for ; and we think, as remarkably countenanced, we desire.

Therefore never to retreat from them, least we be found guilty of that charge, of putting our hand to the plough, and then looking back ; or after vows or making inquiry. And it is earnestly expected, that the reverend presbytery will take the above premises under their serious consideration, and remove the difficulties that we complain of ; so that a door may be opened for a free and full coalescence ; and that there may be a seeing eye, to eye in the great concerns of God's glory, among a witnessing body, is the earnest desire of your humble petitioners ; wishing that the Lord may direct you in this and all other matters that may come before you, concerning his glory.

The above paper lay before them, till a presbytery at Kenos took the same under their consideration, and agreed *extrajudicially*, that the persons concerned therewith should be received on the footing of said paper ; and appointed one of their number to write to those concerned therein ; which was done, and approved of by all the members.

Likewise the congregation laid before the presbytery, a paper containing our scruples, the tenor whereof follows :

*Proposals for Agreement, at Milnathort, in April, 1768.*

That the congregation of Orwell, give in there ad-

herence to the presbytery in the following respect, Unto the very reverend the Moderator, *Humbly sheweth.*

That we in this congregation, having been supplied with sermon for some time, by this reverend court, after mature deliberation on the matter, reckon it our duty to adhere to, and come under your inspection upon this footing, 1<sup>st</sup>, Declaring we cannot as yet see the consistency between the Burgher oath and the oath of our covenants.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That we cannot approve of so long delaying the reflection of public papers, so as the way might be paved, and a door opened for entering into the bond, or at least reasons plainly given to the generation, for not going forward, if it could not be reckoned practicable at the present time.

3<sup>dly</sup>, That we cannot see into, nor (as yet) approve of or be satisfied with the overture of the synod anent mistakes in the testimony to, which, through grace, we desire to adhere. That our adherence to you, be not looked upon as an approbation of these things, and that we be allowed to insist for the removal of these things out of the way, or testify, in our stations, against what we reckon wrong in them: This is submitted to the consideration of the judicatory; if they shall see it meet, either to mark this our adherence and scruples in their minutes, or mark it on the foot of our paper, and return it to us again.

The above will satisfy the most part, if not every one, as to their hearing the gospel, and making no opposition in the least, or disturbance in the congregation.

What would satisfy and clear up those that labour under difficulties, for a full and hearty joining in communion, is, if the synod could see it their duty to declare the taking the Burges oath, in the present circumstances inexpedient; as it is lyable to different interpretations, and so gives offence to many of the Lord's people.

ple; and to advise every one concerned, not to meddle with it.

2dly, That the synod, as soon as possible, rectify these papers before them, and to pave the way for entering into the bond; whether they shall judge it meet, actually to do so, or not, it is not the actual exercising the duty, but a paving the way for it, that we would presently urge. And these, we reckon, would be very satisfactory to many in actual communion with you already, as well as to us; yea, might be introductive to a coalenscence among the whole body of Seceders; and would, through the blessing of God, and greatly for his glory, tend the edification of the church; by extremes falling from, and mutual faults confessed on all hands.

Some time after the death of our worthy pastor, the session and congregation taking into their serious consideration, the loss we sustained, and the dangers we were exposed unto, through the want of the gospel in a fixed way, called a meeting of the congregation, where it was agreed to put two upon the leet, (viz. Messrs. George Coventry and George Thomson) and that the minority should fall in with the majority, to which the congregation agreed, not limiting to add as they saw cause. Upon the footing of this harmony, they agreed to apply to the presbytery for a moderation; which being done, the presbytery granted the same, and appointed the rev. Mr Frazer to moderate.

The day of moderation being come, and the session constitute, the forenamed persons were put upon the leet. Rolls being called and votes marked, it carried by a majority for Mr Thomson.

This call being laid before the presbytery, they delayed the consideration thereof; and, at an after meeting at Kirkcaldie, they, at the request of some who formerly  
joined



joined at Kinross, advised our commissioners to drop said call; which they refused to do, and members of presbytery voted the same off, and urged the commissioners present to acquiesce therewith, which they did for peace sake, in order to keep harmony in the place: a clear evidence that we were by no means, for any divisive course, though highly provoked thereto, by our brethren, Psal. 120. 7. And we humbly think that this is agreeable to the golden rule, "Cease from strife, before it be meddled with" Some time afterward, application was made to the presbytery for a second moderation, which was granted; and accordingly they appointed Mr James Wylie to moderate in said call.

The day of moderation being come, the moderator constitute the session; and after the sermon, rolls being called, two were put upon the leet, Messrs. John Low and George Thomson: it carried by a majority for Mr Thomson; 220 signed said call; which, with the reasons of transportation were given in to the presbytery, and the call sustained as a regular gospel call; and no opposition appearing before any judicatory, whether the same came, at length the affair came before the presbytery at Auchtermuchty, with a roll of adherents to the number of 200, which we were advised to by some members of presbytery, who entered on the consideration thereof. Reasons of transportation being read, and answers thereto from the people of Kilmenny, and parties being heard, the presbytery after hearing Mr Thomson, who referred himself to the court, entering upon the merits of the cause, the substance of their reasoning was, that it was improper to transport him, in regard of the flame that was in the congregation; and yet no public opposition, as yet, appeared, and so the sentence proceeded upon private surmises, which did not publickly appear, a precedent whereof cannot be had nor heard of in any judicatory sacred nor civil, so far as we



we know, *Quantum mutati ab illis!* Against which sentence, David Bennet protested, in name of the congregation, and appealed to the synod at their next meeting.

Reasons of protestation were given in common form to the moderator.

The synod met sometime afterward, and the affair being regularly transmitted unto them, they entered on the consideration thereof. The clerk forgot, or wilfully kept back the minutes of the moderation. None of Kilmenny people appeared in behalf of their minister (not being cited; ) nay, a member of presbytery says, the judicatory purposely kept back Kilmenny people, and ordered them not to attend.

The synod affirmed the sentence of the presbytery, which to us seems a paradox.

Thereafter, the congregation having heard Mr Fletcher and Mr Ballantine (probationers) preach, they agreed to call the congregation together; and being met after a considerable time spent, reasoning upon the state of matters at last came to this resolution, to petition for another Moderation, and a hearing of Mr Ballantyne and others for further satisfaction; which, somewhat obviates the objection, that it was absurd to drop the petition for a moderation, unless a hearing of Mr Ballantyne should be obtained, which, say some, was a manifest evidence, that the congregation were harmoniously centering upon Mr Ballantyne as their object? In answer to which we say, if the congregation were centuring upon him alone, what need for a hearing in order to satisfaction with him?

The Presbytery granted a moderation and appointed the Reverend Mr John Smith to moderate said call, and the session being met before the moderation, a question was put by the moderator, to the session that adhered to Mr Mair, if they were willing to receive such elders

as

as had gone to Kinross? to which they answered, they were willing to receive them. Two of these that had attended at Kinross, answered they were willing to join; but, neither they, nor any of the rest present, joined judicially, nor were inrolled as members of session; two answered, they would take the matter under consideration. Yea, so far were they from joining, that at a constitute meeting of session, one of them being sent for on a particular occasion, before he spoke in the session was careful to have it noticed, that he was no member of this session, and came not there to act as such.

But to return to the call, a leet was proposed by the members of session, viz. Mr William Ballantyne Probationer, and Mr George Thomson, minister of the gospel at Kilmenny; after sermon by the Moderator, and other ordinary forms, proceeded to lay before the congregation, the said leet with power to them, to add or take from said leet as they saw cause; neither of which was done.

The votes came out by a majority for Mr Thomson. This call, with reasons of transportation, was presented to the Presbytery which met at Dining, thro' the inclemency of the weather, few members came up. A paper was given in, (signed by a Preces) to a private meeting of those who formerly attended at Kinross, (and meetings of this kind were frequent among them,) in order to undermine said call, the matter was delayed, till the Presbytery which met at Milnathort, and there the Presbytery read the call, with the paper of opposition thereto, and entered on the consideration thereof; and, without hearing either parties, or reading the reasons of transportation, which were ready if called for, referred the matter. Simpliciter to the Synod, it seemed somewhat strange, to refer the matter thus to the synod, without hearing either party, while the synod could have no distinct view of the same, as it came before them.

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The call came before the Synod, which was read with the paper of opposition thereto, and the synod demanded the reasons of transportation, to which the presbytery answered they had none. After some reasoning at length, not knowing but the call was sustained, when they at length came to understand the same, they found the presbytery culpable for bringing the call to the synod before it was sustained, and accordingly they desisted from remitted it back to the presbytery to judge in the call, which appears to be a plot laid against us, while the presbytery had a power to sustain or reject the call at the first. It seemed also strange, that when they spoke somewhat anent the reasons of transportation, the presbytery clerk refused that they were offered with the call which is a manifest untruth, for they were offered at Duning, and in the commissioner's hand at Orwel, and ready if called for at the synod. It seems likewise strange that at the same synod, an elder who formerly went to Kinross, should attack us upon our principles, and at the same time declare both by word and practice, he would by no means act as an elder or member of the congregation with us, tho' often solicited thereto both by ministers and others; and it seems indeed equally strange that the same member should task us so upon our principles, and at the same time declare he had received satisfaction from the session, which is a manifest evidence that his dissatisfaction was not immediately against us, but against the object we were centering upon, and if he had acted an honest part he ought rather to have quarrelled with the court, who received us upon such principles; and yet the court allowed him without any check so to quarrel us, while we had espoused no new principles. After some reasoning the synod remitted the affair back to the presbytery, and exhorted both parties to study peace and harmony. The presbytery met afterwards at Dunfermline, where we in-

sisted



sisted that our call might be considered, but nothing was done therein. The matter was delayed till next presbytery, which met at Lochgelly, where we gave in answers to the paper of opposition to the call, and the call was sustained as a gospel call regularly proceeded in. And the people of Kilmenny were ordered to get a copy of our reasons of transportation, and cited to appear with answers to the same against next meeting of presbytery at Kinoa, where the presbytery met, and the reasons of transportation and answers thereto being read, the presbytery proposed a conference both with Kilmenny people and us: they conversed with Kilmenny people but not with us. The matter was delayed till next meeting of presbytery at Kirkcaldy, and both parties were cited to attend. The presbytery met the night before the day appointed, resumed the affair of our call, and after some reasoning, declared they could not proceed because the people of Kilmenny were absent, notwithstanding their having a letter from Kilmenny declaring their mind on that head, which we urged should be read in open presbytery; yet was refused. The presbytery agreed to refer the matter to the synod for advice, which was done; after which the presbytery met at Kinross, resumed the affair of our call and enquired at members who attended the synod, what advice they had received therein, a member replied, that the synod advised a committee of the presbytery should converse with the people of Kilmenny, to enquire how matters stood between them and their minister. We again urged that the people of Kilmenny's letter should be read, and tho' it nearly concerned us and was lying on the table; yet this was refused. A motion was made whether they should proceed to the consideration of the affair or delay, upon which a vote was stated and it carried proceeded some members could not have a clear view of the matter for want of the minutes;



notes ; whether they were designedly kept back or not, is not certain. It might indeed strike one with amazement to see a court constitute in the name of Christ act such a self-contradictory part, namely when it was carried by a vote to proceed ; and yet delay because as is evident, they could not carry matters as they inclined. And moreover, there is no room left them by their own conduct to reflect so much upon the Antiburghers ; new constitution as they call it, namely their refusing elders a vote in controversies of faith and cases of conscience while they themselves seemed to act the same part, when it was carried by elders contrary to their designs, Isa. xxix. 15. and that this was really the case seems evident from their after conduct.

It seems indeed strange and stumbling, that at a former presbytery at Kirkcaldy they answered us, when insisting for a decision in the affair, that a presbytery would be appointed at Kinross as a place most central for members to attend at, and a final decision would then be given. Accordingly members did attend pretty full, and yet acting contrary to their former promise.

They delayed the matter to the presbytery to meet at Dundee, and ordered the people of Kilmenny to be cited *De Novo* ; strange conduct to carry the affair to a remote corner where few would or could attend, and indeed equally strange was there, conduct when come there, of which anone.

In the mean time the opposers of this call, who had all along appeared at courts in opposition thereto, by advice of some members of presbytery, came at last to cause a number of people sign an adherence to their paper of opposition, which some declared they never saw nor any transcript thereof.

The presbytery met at Dundee, resumed the affair of our call, read all papers relative thereto ; and parties being

ing heard, our opposers gave in a list of adherence to the forsaide paper of opposition, which was read and received; and our commissioners craved a double thereof in order to see if the persons signing were really members of the congregation or could be allowed to act as such; yet this was refused us though a priviledge seldom or never refused before in courts civil, or ecclesiastic.

The presbytery, after some reasoning, proceeded to a final sentence, and the vote being stated transport or continue, It carried continue. The opposition made by our brethren to this call, was given as the ground of this sentence. The Moderator left the chair not chusing to intimate the sentence, Mr Wylie was desired to take the same which he did; and sentence being intimate, directions being given to both parties, turned next to the opposers of the call, and spoke after this manner to Thomas White, " you and your constituents have been instrumental in keeping the gospel from their poor folks in a fixed way, where, through want of visitation and examination, and visiting of the sick, some souls may be lost, the burden of which I would not have on my spirit upon no consideration; and go home and tell your constituents to consider what you have been doing."

Alexander Bruce, one of our commissioners protested against said sentence, and appealed to the synod promising, to give in reasons to the next synod in due time.

Sometime after, the congregation met and enquired of their commissioners, of the presbytery's conduct anent our call lying before them; to which they answered, they had dismissed the call, and that they had protested in name of the congregation, and had appealed to the next meeting of synod; to which protest and appeal the congregation agreed, and ordered reasons thereof to be given in, in due time to the presbytery.

About this time we had a hearing of some young men, particularly

particularly Mr Lawson, after the hearing of whom. it was proposed by some that a meeting of the congregation should be called in order to understand wherein the difference lay betwixt the pursuers and opposers of the former calls, and the congregation being called together without the advice and consent of the session. Accordingly few of the prosecutors of the former calls met, as not seeing any ground to meet in regard the protest and appeal was lying before the presbytery undiscussed, and they had agreed immediately before to prosecute the same, and the opposers of said call coming up pretty full in order to overturn the protest and appeal, and to push a petition for a moderation at the next presbytery. After they met a question was proposed, what was the design of this meeting? To which it was answered by some, to see whether the congregation was ripe for a moderation, others were of opinion that they were by no means ripe; because neither the elders nor others who had formerly attended at Kinross were unite to our session and congregations; some said that this was by no means the design of this meeting, but rather to try some conference in order to unite the elders and others who came from Kinross, with our session and congregation. In the mean time a motion was made by some, whether the elders and others who had come from Kinross were willing to join with us upon the footing the presbytery received us; to which it was answered by one of the elders who had come from Kinross, if he had known that to be the design of the meeting, he would better have stayed at home. After some reasoning upon matters, a number were for a moderation, others found themselves straitened there anent, as there was a protest and appeal lying before the presbytery. A motion was made by some whether the appeal should be prosecuted before the synod or not thro' our inadvertancy; a number of the opposers  
 who



who had never joined the congregation formerly, but to oppose, thrust in themselves as voters in conjunction, with the rest. A vote was stated, prosecute or drop said appeal? A number opposed this vote: it carried drop in regard as was formerly noticed, few of the prosecutors of the call were present. A motion then was made ripe for a moderation or not? One of the elders who came from Kinross answered, if the object was agreeable to the congregation he would fall in therewith, and if otherwise he would not fall in. Some of the members of the congregation answered, they would retain their christian privilege to elect whom they pleased; to which no answer was given. It was asked if they had any object in view? Some mentioned Mr Lawson as a fit object for this congregation. A vote was stated, ripe for a moderation, and it carried ripe; a number were against petitioning, as not ripe. Commissioners were named to petition the presbytery for a moderation, which neither the ordinary clerk would write nor the presces sign.

The presbytery being met at Auchtermuchty, both the opposite parties formerly mentioned came, and occasionally met together, and some of the members of presbytery being there, an extrajudicial conference was proposed by both parties, and some of the members of presbytery were present thereat. Our commissioners urged for an actual minister to come and hold a fast, as a means thro' the blessing of God, to coalesce both session and congregation, and then if we could not fall in with the moderation, we should not oppose; and tho' fasting is usual before a moderation, yet notwithstanding of the reason forementioned, together with this, it was superciliously denied.

From what is above narrated, it is evident the presbytery were acting in a partial manner in receiving a petition so blank as aforesaid, a clear evidence of want of harmon



harmony in the congregation, tho' this was always given by them as the reasons before, for their dealing so with us, and it may be said of them ;

From first to last, themselves indeed,

They unlike Levi shew

In judgment, who nor parents saw,

Brethren nor children knew. (Deut. xxxiii. 9.)

The members of presbytery who were present at the former conference, owned that our grievances complained of were mildly represented, and ought to be marked in the minutes of presbytery but to our great surprize, when these very members came to the presbytery, they, together with the rest, acted and spake in a very different manner ; had grievous complaints against our paper as containing falshoods, (which was offered to be proven at the bar to be truth and no-falshood,) and being below the dignity (while no word of the duty) of their office to regard it, however they came at length to allow said paper to ly upon the table till next meeting of presbytery.

They received the petition, tho' neither signed by preces nor clerk as above, and granted the same without any quarrel, and appointed Mr Frazer to moderate in said call.

The day of moderation being come, Mr Frazer and the members of session met together in the morning said day, he declared he would not constitute the session ; which opened a wide door for a promiscuous multitude to join in voting, without being regularly attested ; and accordingly some voted who were members of no-congregation, and others who had never heard the object preach ; how then can it be reconciled with presbyterian principles, when the session was not allowed to constitute as above and none but one or two (one of which has never since acted judicially) members of the old session would

sign the call? a manifest evidence that the old session must be disregarded, and a new one constitute, in order to carry on their design; and as before noticed, they have no room left to reflect so much upon new constitutions, while it is evident by indigitation, this is one, Isa. xxix. 16.

Members of session had some conference among themselves about objects to be on the leet, some were for Mr Thomson. Such elders as had come from Kinross had quit Mr Lawson, who was the only object they had in view when the moderation was sought, and were for leetting Mr Thomas Porteous, who had never preached in the place before the moderation was sought, one of the elders of our session, namely George Simson, gave it as his best advice, and others were of the same mind, considering the perplexed situation of affairs, that the moderator should preach and then dismiss the congregation; which was not done. The moderator proceeded, and after sermon, Mr Porteous and Mr Thomson were leetted, when the rolls were called, many who had come with a design to vote for Mr Lawson, were so perplexed when they heard Mr Porteous leetted in his room, together with the conduct of the presbytery formerly toward us, declined voting for any, and many did not attend. After a roll not attested (as before noticed) was called, the call came out for Mr Porteous. Only two elders signed the call often members of session, who had formerly constitute, or has acted since as such, for George Hoy was never ordained an elder in our community, but in Leslie; nor had he a quarter ever assigned him in our community; nor was ever appointed by the session to collect on Sabbath, as the minutes of session can attest, Isa. xxix. 16.

The elders who came from Kinross were allowed to sign the call as elders, tho' never judicially joined with our session, tho' often solicited thereto.

Remarkable

Remarkable is the difference betwixt this and the last call in the former. None were admitted by the Moderator, after the dismissing out of the church, to sign the call (tho' some desired the same) for this reason, that the witnesses were gone, which is false; they remained to the end in the latter even in the church; some signed in a remote corner without witnesses; which some observing, asked where the witnesses were; it was answered, every one would witness another; which conduct frightened some from signing, and likewise warning was given after they were come out of the church, by the church-officer, thro' the several parts of the town, if any wanted to sign the call.

After this, such of our congregation as had not freedom to concur in said call, met, and after some reasoning, being loth, if better might have been, to strike out against the call. They agreed to lay the true state of the matter before the presbytery, thinking after hearing thereof, and considering matters as they stood with us, they would dismiss this call, and appointed commissioners to attend for that effect.

The presbytery met at Kirkcaldy, and our commissioners being heard, the presbytery demanded of them if they had a mind to oppose said call? One of them answered, not yet expecting they would not proceed to sustain said call, as the matter presently stood with the congregation. A member of presbytery afterward declared he was both glad and wo; at this answer glad, that there was no opposition as yet, and wo from the hint given, he doubled, there might yet be opposition. And by the bye, in his manner of speaking, the foresaid commissioner may be justly vindicate, from the aspersion thrown out against him by some, as if he had said, there never would be any opposition keeping away the words as yet, and such an expression is not unscriptural, John vii. 8. where our

Lord says, I go not up yet unto this feast, yet is evident from the 10ht verse he went up afterward. Also the Rev. Mr Smith, promised to assist Mr Forrest at his sacrament, and went not, yet by the presbytery was afterward excused as not being guilty of lying. After some reasoning among members of presbytery they proceeded to sustain the call, as a gospel-call regularly proceeded in, and appointed to write to Mr Porteous, and assigned some pieces of trial unto him in order to his ordination.

Such as could not fall in with the call met afterward to consider what was meet to be done in the present case, and a paper was drawn up, the tenor whereof follows;

After this the presbytery met at Dunfermline, where we gave in a paper signed by 153 persons, who declared themselves dissatisfied with their conduct, and the conduct of our opposing brethren relative to the call for Mr Porteous and Commissioners attending, said presbytery, gave in said paper which was rejected, and our commissioners were held as forgers of lies, and treated with the greatest ignominy; which conduct of the court, may indeed seem strange, while the presbytery received a paper at Dundee, in opposition to the former call without any quarrel, and was made use of as a very great handle against the same, and all along was made the chief reason, why they acted after the manner they did. But how such conduct can be freed from partial dealing, we leave to the candid reader to judge? But to return, they endeavoured to cut off some of our elders and members of congregation, from acting in that capacity in the court.

At the next meeting of presbytery at Kirkaldy, a paper of grievances was given in, and after some reasoning thereupon and tashing, our commissioners upon our principles, tho' we adduced the best authority, and orthodox divines for the support of what we held, yet this was not regarded but refused.

The



The presbytery agreed to apply to the synod for advice, yet after our commissioners were gone, they referred the matter simpliciter to the synod, whether, when our commissioners were come, they were cut off from acting as members of the congregation, in regard their names were not insert in a paper lying before them, which was transmitted *Gum nota*. Only one of the commissioners, whose name was insert in the first paper, was allowed to speak. After some reasoning upon the affair, the synod appointing the presbytery to take in what part of Mr Porteous's trials were unpass, in order to proceed to his settlement.

After which procedure, when the commissioner who formerly was allowed to speak, who offered and did protest against the same, he was declared to be no member of the congregation, and consequently had no right to speak there, and his protest rejected, declared they would not mark it. Strange conduct to allow a commissioner just a little before to act as a member, and immediately to denud him of this privilege merely, because he protested against their procedure, this is indeed, strange and shocking! Likewise the candidate being allowed to speak, shewed the difficulties that occurred to him in the present case and cited some scriptures relative thereto, particularly Jer. xxiii. at the beginning, 1 Sam. xvi. 6. and downward, and said that although he had the majority of actors, in the day of Moderation, yet it was far from the majority of the congregation, which seemed an evidence to him that it was not the Lord's call.

After this a meeting of the congregation being called and met to concert what was most proper to be done in the present case; and accordingly, both pursuers and opposers of the call, met together in the church. It was proposed to constitute by prayer as was usual, but one of the pursuers of the call opposed this motion, and this was an

evidence of no good cause, when they would not allow it to be prefaced with prayer. At which meeting when the pursuers not finding matters carried on according to their mind, not having a majority on their side, retired to a public house. The opposers of the call continued in the church and choosed commissioners to attend the next meeting of presbytery. After this some conference ensued betwixt both pursuers and opposers of the call, at which the pursuers of the call offered to lay aside the present object, if the opposers would lay aside all former objects, to which they answered, that although they agreed to that for themselves they could not for the congregation, in regard this would be a denuding them, of their christian privilege, contrary to presbyterian principles. Every one having power to leet whom he pleaseth; but they agreed that if the congregation were called together, and brought to harmony. Let them leet whom they pleased, and if we could not acquiesce with the the choice, we should not oppose; none of those proposals were gone into. Both parties attended, when the presbytery met at Perth, where our commissioners were mal-treat in an ignominious way as formerly. The pursuers of the call were allowed to bring out what had passed at the foresaid meeting, in so far as it made for the cause; they were presently prosecuting, but the opposers instead of having this privilege granted them tho' most just. Doth our law judge any man before it hear him? Yet were ridiculed and railed upon by a member of presbytery, who desired them to bring out what they had to say against his speech, in condemning them, which when they essayed to do were interrupted in a magisterial manner. And further, when one of the callers desired liberty to speak, at first this was granted, when it was heard he was one of the callers; but when they heard what he had to say, which was much to the purpose. Although

he

he was one of the callers, he desired justice to be done to the opposers, which he he did not see done here. Whereupon he was immediately interrupted, a glaring evidence that nothing was to be heard in opposition to what was intended, for if they would not hear any thing from a pursuer of the call ; how could it be expected any opposer should be heard ? Moreover, when one of our commissioners insisted for liberty to declare his mind, namely to shew wherein he thought they had a liberty to speak their mind ; a privilege he was justly intitled to as a christian he was in an arbitrary manner interrupted, as having no right to speak there ; this privilege, even a heathen magistrate granted unto Paul, Acts xxvi. 1. Against which injustice, the commissioner protested which was rejected.

We have before noticed, and still think that it is contrary to presbyterian principles to moderate a call, without a constitute session which the court seemed to be convicted of in their own conscience, else they would not have sent up a member, undesired by us to constitute a session as a mean requisite to carry on their purpose, with some shadow of presbyterian principles. An evidence of the truth of this, is their way and manner of warning the members of session, and their partial dealing therein ; namely, warning whom they thought proper, and omitting others that had an ancient claim, refusing such as had been regularly ordained in this congregation, and had constitute with them on various occasions, and taking in numbers of those who were never called, nor ordained in this congregation, who had hitherto refused to constitute with the session in this place. And the said member who was sent up by the court, owned that even such as he would have secluded from his office could not go into another session, without his edict being served anew ; and hence we argue by a parity of reason. Such as had come from

Kinross, ought to have had their edict served before they could be admitted members of our session.

It seems also strange, that some of the elders who had attended formerly at Kinross, refused hitherto, to join judicially our session, unless they received satisfaction, as to the censures past against some of them by Mr Mair, which the session could not give. A member of our session asked how it came about, that such elders had received satisfaction anent their scruples? It was asked, where or from whom they received them? to which no reply was made. After this when some were departing, one of the elders who had come from Kinross, asked at one of the members of our session, what advice he would give in the present juncture? to which he answered, that according to his view, the most proper method would be to lay aside the present object, and bring the congregation and session to harmony, before they granted a new moderation; to which the member of presbytery replied, if every one in the congregation would speak so, he would be glad to foreward this motion, he, without the session being constitute, and never was till the settlement was past, departed. It seems to have been the practice of the church of Scotland in former times, if there were a considerable party in the congregation, reclaiming against the settling of a minister. in a vacant congregation he was not to be settled there; and this seems to have been made use of in the former calls, in as far as making for the purpose but in this call, seems to be buried in oblivion, although often mentioned by us and seems indeed strange, that the moderator who moderate in the third call, for Mr Thomson prayed. that the Lord might give a perfect lot, and after the lot came out, prayed for a blessing upon the Lord's lot. And when that call came before the synod where some members of synod advised our commissioners to drop said call, they answered, they could by no means  
do



do it for the forementioned reasons and appealed to the foreſaid member, if the matter was not as above expreſſed, to that the member of preſbytery answered with ſilence, an evidence he could not deny what was advanced.

It ſeems indeed ſomewhat odd, that when ſome of the purſuers of Mr Porteous call, wanted a moderation of adherence to it; they, at ſome private meeting without the knowledge of the congregation, went to Kenoa to a preſbytery which was termed a *pro re nata* preſbytery; but in reality it was not in regard members were not all cited; yea ſome of thoſe that were next to the place, which can be proven. And after a member was appointed to moderate in ſaid adherence, he reſuſed and one after another, till afterward one of the purſuers went perſonally to Mr Wylie, who on his way to the next preſbytery came, and when he was come, the oppoſers appeared and declared it was contrary to the rule, for it was not ſought by the congregation; and one of the members of ſeſſion offered to proteſt againſt it, but was not heard. And it is obſervable the foreſaid member declared in open court (when we gave in a paper of opoſition to the call ſigned by a conſiderable number,) that in his way to the moderation of adherence, a day before the preſbytery he converſed with a man, about four miles from the place of worſhip, who owned that he had ſigned the foreſaid paper, and knew not what he had ſigned, and yet upon due enquiry, no ſuch man can be found; which ſeems to be a palming this upon a dead man.

After this when the preſbytery met at Dunfermline, we gave in a paper of grievances, the tenor whereof follows:

*Unto the very Reverend, the Moderator and Remanent Members of the Associate Presbytery of Perth, and Dunfermline ; to meet at Dunfermline in the ——— day of July 1771. The Representation of the body, of the Session and Members of the congregation of Orwel ;*

*Humbly Sheweth,*

\*\*\*\*\* H A T whereas, there is a call presently upon  
 \* T \* the field for Mr Thomas Porteous. We beg  
 \* \* \* leave to declare our mind thereto, in a few  
 \*\*\*\*\* particulars. And first, we complain that when  
 we came under the inspection of the Reverend presbytery,  
 we came as a distinct congregation by ourselves, and ac-  
 cordingly, were thus received by the presbytery, (and still  
 continue to be the body representative both of elders and  
 members of the congregation,) we complain that a part  
 of another congregation joining with some of ours, should  
 impose a minister upon us contrary to our inclinations,  
 and reckon we meet with the same treatment, or very si-  
 milar thereto, of which the Reverend Mr Ebenezer Er-  
 skine complains with his brethren, before the commission  
 of the general assembly in their representation, Page  
 33. 34. Where they say that by act of Assembly a door  
 should be opened for thrusting ministers upon congrega-  
 tions in opposition to the declared mind, both of the el-  
 ders and people, who are willing and ready to submit to  
 every ordinance of the gospel, dispensed according to the  
 institution of Christ and Page 35. Where they say when  
 the synod whereof we are members, did take the new  
 condemned expressions under their consideration. We  
 and several others of our brethren did insist, that this af-  
 fair might be dropt; we represented the dangerous ef-  
 fects that a foreward pushing of it might produce, which  
 we humbly think has been essayed by us in our case, and  
 we still fear the dangerous effects, if this is persisted in.

2dly,

2dly, We complain that the edict should be served at one place, and returned at another, which seems not to have been the practice of the christian church in former times, and it seems somewhat strange, that either the weak, should be deprived of the opportunity, or others thus brought to unnecessary trouble there anent; and we cannot help thinking, but restricting us to such a practice is contrary to the mind and plain testimony of the judicious, viz. The Reverend Mr Thomas Boston in his mind given in his Letter to the presbytery, *Selkirk, Feb. 22d, 1732.* where speaking of people being denuded of their christian privilege, by which means they are flaked down to the choice made for them, unless they can advance something, against the life or doctrine of the called, the which strangers, as well as they of the congregation have access to. I own there is all along been too much of this in the way, of settling ministers in the church, and this likewise was the mind of the Reverend Mr Erskine, and his brethren in their representation, given in to the commission, met at Edinburgh, *August 8th, 1733.* Where speaking of christians, being deprived of their privilege, have nothing left by that act, but a bare general approbation or disapprobation; and, even that same hampered by obliging the disapprovers, to give the reasons of their dissent, which as it is commonly explained, must be confined to doctrine and morals, without any other consideration, to which we cordially agree, as consonant to our standards founded on the word of God; and how much our case is similar is evident to any that will look impartially therein.

3dly, It is matter of grief and lamentation, that the associate congregation in Stirling, now for some time have been in the flames of contention and division, which ought to be matter of deep concern to the Lord's people. We are surprized that the Reverend court, after having the woeful experience of the dismal effects of such renting, should

should proceed so far in the present affair, which in all appearance must have the same dismal effect, and it seems to be safe to follow the exhortation; cease from strife, before it be meddled with, the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out waters, hoping that the presbytery will duly weigh these things, and if the presbytery shall reject this, we certify them, that we must take what steps are proper. and we desire a precedent in the secession, to settle a minister, where the body of the elders and congregation, are opposing the same; for the truth of which we refer unto the congregational roll.

Which they refused to read, but after some reasoning among themselves with difficulty, permitted one of our commissioners to read it, and then desired a reading of it, after a member had glanced at it, he began to tear it as being most unjust and unreasonable, containing many untruths, yet not one of these were proven by them, and two other members treat it after the same manner, in the face of a considerable auditory, and yet we were not allowed to speak any thing at that time in our own defence; for reason would say, as they spake their mind publicly in accusing us: we should be allowed to vindicate ourselves publicly; also, but this was often the way, of the presbytery, when they had spoken their mind; none were allowed to speak after them.

After this the presbytery met in the session-house, and allowed the pursuers, and opposers of the call to speak, where they began to rash us, as being of different principles from the court, and to make good the assertion. A member of presbytery pointed at one of our commissioners, saying, there is a man that would not have his child baptized by a member of presbytery, as being of different principles; whereas, he only desired a liberty to testify in his station, against what was wrong in the court, so much was readily granted us when we joined the presbytery,



tery, and the said member viz. *M. J. S.* alledged that he was not there, when we were received else he would never have voted to receive us on that footing, which is false, that the said member was there Can be proven by the minutes of the presbytery, and that he voted to receive us, and grant us the said liberty, as above can be proven, also by witnesses, and receiving us on the above footing one of our commissioners took instruments. But it is evident by their conduct they were sensible, they had promised what they could not perform in a consistency with themselves; and therefore, took this poor shift to preserve their own credit.

After this when they returned again to the church, and entered upon the call for Mr Thomas Porteous, he craved liberty to speak which was granted, and he expressed himself much to this purpose. "I see ground to reject this call on various accounts, *1<sup>st</sup>*, On account of the paucity of the signers thereof, considering the congregational roll. *2<sup>dly</sup>*, I have been endeavouring to lay matters before the Lord, and if I understand any thing of the Lord's mind from his word. It is to reject it, and I think my conscience supports me therein *3<sup>dly</sup>*, There is another reason, that may seem light to the court, I reckon myself most unfit to go there, in the midst of a flame, which the Presbytery, yea the synod have not been able to quench, and I declare that if the presbytery proceed therein, I will protest against the same. But we never heard of the said protest, nor any satisfying reason, why it was kept back? The presbtery for most part, agreed to forward the ordination, nothing being referred to the synod; none of us on that account being up. The presbytery meeting there, took the advantage fixed the time of his ordination afterward, when the presbytery met at Lochgelly, and read the minutes of former presbytery, which had fixed the time of Mr Porteous ordination; also they appointed his

his edict to be served, against which our commissioners protested, which was refused to be marked, and a member of the presbytery declared that matters were now much cleared, formerly there were eight opposing, now they were come to three, that he did, or at least might know other things, is evident both from what had past before, and what has followed since that time. The day of ordination being come, a considerable number both of elders and people, that could not fall in with the same, having been matter of concern resolved to protest against the same. The tenor whereof follows :

*PROTEST and DECLARATION from the Body of the  
SESSION and MANAGERS, and a great number of  
the Congregation of ORWEL, to the Reverend the  
MODERATOR, and remanent Ministers of the Associate  
Presbytery of PERTH, and DUNFERMLINE.*

\* + + + \* H E church of Scotland has been greatly  
† T † oppressed, for upwards of forty years by ju-  
\* ~~dicatorys~~ \* dicatorys, obtruding ministers upon vacant  
congregations, contrary to the rule, till it came to  
that height, that some ministers seceded from the ju-  
dicatorys, to the relief of the Lord's oppressed he-  
ritage; yet it is matter of grief and lamentation to us,  
that this evil (which is like to be the ruin of the church  
of Scotland,) has entered into the secession as witness the  
the settlement of Stirling, with Mr Robert Campbell, and  
likewise the presbytery, with authority from the synod,  
is now about to settle Mr Thomas Porteous, in this con-  
gregation, which we have no freedom in our minds to  
fall in with, but commit the matter to the righteous  
Judge of all the earth, who will Judge righteously; and do  
hereby testify (as we have done all along) against it for  
these reasons.

*ist,*

1<sup>st</sup>, The elders and others who came from Kinross community, were never unite with us, but opposed our measure continually; and it seems contrary both to religion and reason, for a party from another community to obtrude a minister upon us.

2<sup>dly</sup>, We were nowise ripe for this moderation when it was sought; for there was a protest lying before the presbytery, which ought either to have been dropt or discussed before any moderation; and further, the moderation was sought in view of Mr Lawson, and they changed their object, which occasioned great confusion and perplexity; whereby many declined voting.

3<sup>dly</sup>, When the day of moderation came, the moderator did not constitute the session according to form, that they might judically judge who ought to have signed, and who not.

4<sup>thly</sup>, A number of people signed this call as elders who had no connexion with the session, obtruding themselves in this, and other things in session and congregation.

5<sup>thly</sup>, The bulk of our session and congregation have not signed this call, nor signified their accession thereto, before any church Judicatory. But three of our session have yet signed the call, and we cannot but look upon this as a violent intrusion upon this congregation, and we think the scripture supports us in this Jer. xxiii. 12. Wo be to the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, thus saith the Lord, Ezek. xxxiv. 21. Because ye have thrust them with side and shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad, John x. He that entereth not in by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and robber And we judge it our duty to testify against it, and do protest against the fore-said settlement, as being contrary to the word of God,  
our

our approved standards, the sentiments of sound divines, the practice of the church in her purest times, and contrary to the judicial act and testimony, emmitted by the associate presbytery; and do declare that there is no pastoral relation betwixt him and us; and that it shall be lawfull, and warrantable for us, to seek the gospel where the Lord may open a door of opportunity, and that whatever bad consequences may follow upon this, we shall not be to blame: upon all which we take instruments signed in name of the whole that shall adhere by our preses.

And acquainting the presbytery that we were to protest, they desired us to desist; which could not be done in a way of exonerating our own conscience. But immediately went and read it publicly, in the face of the congregation, before public worship. After sermon they proceeded to the ordination, where it was openly declared by *Mr T. W.* who preached the ordination sermon, that never before, nor as yet, any opposition had appeared against this settlement; at the hearing of which, some were so amazed and confounded, that they were not capable to join decently in public worship, and never since have entered that place of worship *Milnathort, Oct. 25th, 1771.*

The managers also meeting in the morning said day, after reasoning, the majority agreed to close the church doors, which was accordingly done; but the callers who hitherto had regarded no opposition, instead of entering in a decent and christian manner by the door, rather like thieves and robbers brake in at the window.

*To the People in and about ORWEL, called PROTESTERS.*

*Dear Friends,*

**I** Am informed, you are about to publish something of the treatment you have got from the Burgher associate Judicatures. I expected an answer from them to my  
printed



printed paper before this time ; but am informed, they despise it, as unworthy of their notice. What seems to answer their purpose far better, is, to go about among the people in a clandestine way, and blacken my character, making them believe, I am one of the worst of criminals on the face of the earth ; a blasphemer, and what not : but if my blasphemy (as they call it) be only against their *golden image*, and *goddes diana of arbitrary authority*, they have set up ; I am the less careful to answer them in this matter : for they have never to this day (tho' challenged, I know not how often) brought forth one *divine command*, or *ordination engagement* I have broken, in the matter of my dispute with them : as I have made evident to the world, they have done in their treatment of me, and others.

When Mr Ebenezer Erskine and others were accused by the established church, they had all *access* to see their *accusations*, and purge themselves from them. When the rupture happened in the associate synod, tho' the Burgers did not apply to the Antiburghers for extracts of their accusations (not owning them as a court) yet these were *printed* ; whereby they also had *access* to defend themselves : but no such thing can be allowed me. (1.) when an accusation was brought unto the judicatures against me, by the praying societies in Mr Smiths congregation, tho' I demanded an extract under form of instrument ; my just demand was *denied*. In vain do they pretend, these people *took back* their *paper* : as if a man's putting up his dagger was a sufficient satisfaction for giving his neighbour a mortal wound with it (2.) Mr Shirra, by authority of synod, read from Mr Smith's pulpit in Dunfermline a long paper on a Sabbath day, pretending to *suspend*, or depose me from the office of my ministry ; of that also, I demanded an extract : but was again refused. In vain do they pretend, I only applied to *Mr Shirra* ;

C

and

not to the *judicatures*: when these judicatures have absolutely refused extracts to what purpose apply to such men again, their works are works of wickedness, and darkness.

“ O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their  
“ assembly, mine honour, be not thou united, for in their  
“ anger they slew a man, and in their self will they dig-  
“ ged down a wall.”

It is said of the grand Signior, his power is unlimited, the people as well as the country are his property, every man's life is at his disposal, his subjects he squeezes, disgraces, and puts to death upon the least suggestion of their disaffection, without giving them an opportunity of answering for themselves; and when this is done, the rest are so besotted, that they never enquire into the cause of such conduct; but only tell it as a piece of news. Sorry am I, if the people in Scotland, and Seceders among others turn so besotted with the unlimited power churchmen take to themselves in suspending, deposing, and excommunicating their brethren, without clear causes, and a fair trial; that all the concern they will shew, is to pass their time in telling such a man is censured, suspended, deposed, excommunicated. Who would have thought twenty, or thirty years since, that these very pulpits sounding with complaints against unhallowed censures, without scripture, or reason, should now be thundering forth censures of the very same nature? with this addition of tyranny, that the sufferer cannot have access to examine them, either for his own *conviction*, supposing they were *just*, or their *conviction*, who inflict them, in case they be *wrong*, as certainly they are. — By allowing the above a place in what you publish, you will oblige,

Dear Friends,

Your Servant in Duty.

Innerkeithing, March 4th, }

DAVID FORREST.



F I N I S.

AN  
E L E G Y  
UPON THE  
D E A T H  
OF THE  
REVEREND

Mr THOMAS MAIR,

Minister of the Gospel at ORWEL; who  
died February 14th, 1768.

HOW frail is man how soon reduc'd  
To's mother's dust again?  
In Death's cold arms, till time's no more,  
He silent must remain.

Like ship at sea, driven with the wind,  
Man is in life at best;  
From wave to wave he quickly flies;  
In time no solid rest.

No sooner some are on their course,  
Than landed on the shore;  
While others stem the swelling tide,  
For seventy years and more.

What dreadful storms some voyagers  
Have met with in their way?  
Few more than worthy Mr Mair:  
But his God was his stay.

The

The worth of virtue is not known  
 Till in its subjects try'd :  
 This christian hero suffer'd much  
 In life, before he died.

His early love to gospel truths,  
 His conduct influenc'd ;  
 Truth's enemies oppress'd him much,  
 As soon's he was licenc'd.

No artifice nor sad reproach  
 Could ever change his course ;  
 The ways of truth were his delight,  
 And of his joys the source.

Of grace the doctrine still he preach'd ;  
 No part of truth conceal'd :  
 The grounds and warrants of true faith,  
 He honestly reveal'd.

The legal and self-righteous heart,  
 He artefully expos'd ;  
 Such as exalt our natural powers,  
 He zealously oppos'd.

That grace doth reign thro' righteousness,  
 Unto th' eternal life ;  
 Of all the chosen of Adam's race,  
 It was his firm belief,

That through the Death of Christ alone,  
 A vent is opened  
 For sovereign grace, whereby our sins  
 Are freely pardoned.

That



That unto all and every one  
 Of Adam's guilty race,  
 Is freely sent and offered,  
 The word of gospel grace.

That in the precious blood of christ,  
 Sufficient virtue lies,  
 To expiate the guilt of all,  
 If't so appointed was.

That Christ in some sense dy'd for all;  
 'Twas said he did maintain;  
 Said others, this imports that he  
 In some sense dy'd in vain.

Was't vain for him to satisfy  
 Justice, by what he indur'd?  
 Or was it vain to magnify  
 The law that was injur'd?

Had only one of Adam's sons  
 Been chosen to be sav'd  
 For his redemption, justice had  
 No less a ransom crav'd.

Nay had redemption been design'd  
 For all the human race,  
 A ransom of infinite worth,  
 Was an adequate price.

No flaming sword, no cherubims,  
 Now guard the tree of life;  
 From Heaven, mercy's now proclaim'd  
 To sinners even the chief.

Yea from the Death of Christ, God, man,  
 To all men mercies flow,  
 While sovereign grace to angels lost,  
 Doth no such favour show.

Whence is't that reprobates themselves  
 Enjoy the least reprove  
 'Tis owing to the Death of Christ  
 That they're preserv'd alive.

Such truths, such precious truths as these  
 He faithfully proclaim'd  
 Tho' by his co-ambassadors  
 He loudly was defam'd.

His great and just ambition was  
 T' exalt the grace of God  
 And to commend to sinners lost  
 The virtue of Christ's blood.

Mean time, this truth he daily preach'd,  
 Which numbers can attest;  
 The Elect and they only are  
 Sav'd by the Death of Christ.

They and they only saved are,  
 Unto eternal life;  
 While reprobates who were not chosen,  
 Shall die without relief.

Sometimes he us'd the scripture phrase,  
 Christ gave himself for all,  
 A ransom of infinite worth;  
 Whence comes the gospel call.

What

What ground for process or complaint?

What ground for censure there?

For this alone he was arraign'd;

His words preverted were.

No matter whether right or wrong,

Arraign'd but he must be;

From pulpits and from public tents

Invectives cruel must fly.

Why such a flame of furious zeal,

What cause can be assign'd?

Why have his once so faithful friends,

So quickly chang'd their mind?

Whate'er his bretheren said of him,

Smell'd rank of hostile wrath;

Tantæ celestibus Iræ

O tell it not in Gath.

With catching queries, and new creeds,

In council they combin'd;

His answers never were said they,

Expressive of his mind.

No popish council ever did

In Portugal or Spain,

With to much rigour prosecute,

A protestant divine.

No explication of his words

That ever he propos'd,

Could satisfaction yield to them.

No, he must be depos'd.

Accordingly,

Accordingly, with one accord,  
 The sentence was pronounc'd;  
 A new heretic born he was  
 Most awfully denounc'd.

What dreadful lengths does furious zeal  
 Drive prejudiced minds?  
 Like thips unload, that toss and roll  
 Before the stormy winds.

Like waves that lash the solid rocks,  
 Their Anathemas roar'd,  
 Against the man they once admir'd,  
 And mightily ador'd.

In spite of all he never swerv'd,  
 From what he was assur'd  
 Was truth; and what he could not cure,  
 He patiently indur'd,

No faint in any age of time,  
 When persecution rag'd,  
 More tamely suffer'd for the cause  
 Wherein he was engag'd,

Had truth's avowed enemies,  
 His persecutors been,  
 The scene would not have been so strange,  
 Nor yet the cause unseen.

Profess'd they were, but cruel friends,  
 To wound the usefulness  
 Of him, who all his life time was  
 Renown'd for faithfulness.

Where'er



Where'er truth's banner was display'd,  
 There he desir'd to be;  
 And from the footsteps of the flock,  
 He never chus'd to fly.

He never durst his conscience wound,  
 Nor cringe to human pride;  
 And of truth's enemies the scorn,  
 He bravely fac'd the tide.

Rather than counteract his light,  
 He chus'd to stand alone;  
 But still his master's countenance,  
 Upon him brightly shone.

When, now disjoin'd from human aid,  
 His trust was in the Lord:  
 And in old age to him he did  
 Sufficient strength afford.

For several years before his Death,  
 His practice testify'd,  
 That all the troubles he endur'd,  
 Were truly sanctified.

How meek how lowly. how resign'd,  
 And how benevolent,  
 How cheerfully through all the parts  
 Of's ministry he went?

The downcast and disconsolate,  
 He tenderly reviv'd;  
 From all their groundless doubts and fears,  
 By him they were reliev'd.

From

From's lips, like dew, the precious truths  
 Of gospel grace distill'd;  
 Which many a drooping weary soul,  
 With joy and gladness fill'd.

From all his troubles now he rests,  
 Triumphs victoriously,  
 'Bove all his enemies round about,  
 His head is lifted high.

F I N I S.



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